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# Alexander the Great,

A

## TRAGEDY;

With ALTERATIONS,

As it is now performed at the



## THEATRES-ROYAL

IN

## DRURY-LANE

AND

## COVENT-GARDEN.



L O N D O N :

Printed for T. WALLER, T. LONGMAN, C. CORRET,  
T. CASLON, W. NICOLL, and S. BLADON. 1770.

[Price 1s. 6d.]

Alexander the Great

T. R. A. G. B. Y.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

and a new edition of the

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN

THEATRE-ROYAL

AND

THEATRE-ROYAL



LONDON:

Printed by T. W. Allen, 10, Bedford Square, W.C. 1.  
and by J. W. Smith, 10, St. Paul's Churchyard, W.C. 1.  
[London]

# EPILOGUE,

Spoken by ROXANA.

**A**RRAIN'D for murder,---lo! I stand before ye,  
But e'er you pass my sentence, hear my story.  
What passive woman, were she in my place,  
Cou'd brook such usage? Horrible disgrace! }  
To kiss the saucy minx before my face;  
Hang on her neck, and sigh, and swear, and bellow—  
Oh; I've not patience with the filthy fellow.  
What, tho' one world my hero deem'd deficient,  
One wife for any hero's sure sufficient.  
You must allow 'twould any mortal vex  
To lose the only comfort of one's sex.  
Her nuptial right; which of you all would share it?  
And half a husband, Gods! what wife cou'd bear it!  
But what, still worse than all the rest provokes me,  
To think his crowns and sceptres e'er cou'd coax me.  
Let all the empire of the world's wide span  
Be her's---but not an atom of my man.  
Methinks I hear each wedded fair-one cry,  
Well done, Roxana-----she deserv'd to die.  
What Christian wife cou'd bear such double dealing?  
And sure your heathen women have their feeling.  
Two wives! 'Tis matrimonial fornication:  
~~Pray~~ Heav'n avert such customs from this nation!  
By such let Eastern wives be bubbled still.  
Two wives! for shame, two husbands if you will.  
Ay, this indeed might suit a free-born woman.  
Besides, our beaus---poor things!---are not like Ammon.  
While thus you plead, this inference let me draw,  
Nature is Love's great universal law.  
All feel alike what some disguise with art,  
And each wrong'd wife's Roxana in her heart.  
If none of you cou'd tamely yield her man,  
Then find me guilty, Ladies, if you can.

DRAMA-

# DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Alexander	-	5	- Mr. Smith.
Hephestion	-	7	- Mr. Dyer.
Lyfimachus	-	-	- Mr. Hull.
Cassander	-	-	- Mr. Clarke.
Polyperchon	-	-	- Mr. Perry.
Perdiccas	-	-	- Mr. Davis.
Clytus	-	-	- Mr. Gibson.
Theſſalus	-	-	- Mr. Smith.
Eumenes	-	-	- Mr. Fox.
Roxana	-	5	- Mrs. Bellamy.
Syſigambis	-	-	- Mrs. Vincent.
Parifatis	-	-	- Miſs Ogilvie.
Statira	-	5	- Mrs. Yates.

ALEX-

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# Alexander the Great.

## ACT I. SCENE I.

The Gardens of Semiramis.

HEPHESTION and LYSIMACHUS fighting.

CLYTUS parting them.

CLYTUS.

**W**HAT are you madmen? this a time for  
quarrel?  
Put up I say—Or, by the Gods that form'd me,  
He who refuses makes a foe of Clytus.

LYSIMACHUS.

I have his sword.

CLYTUS.

But must not have his life.

LYSIMACHUS.

Must not! old Clytus!

CLYTUS.

Hair-brain'd boy, you must not.

HEPHESTION.

Lend me thy sword, thou father of the war,  
Thou far-fam'd guard of Alexander's life:

Curse

## ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

Curse on this weak unexecuting arm !  
Lend it, old Clytus, to redeem my fame ;  
Lyfimachus is brave, and else will scorn me.

LYSIMACHUS.

There, take thy sword ; and, since thou'rt bent  
on death,  
Know, 'tis thy glory that thou dy'st by me.

CLYTUS.

Stay thee, Lyfimachus ; Hephestion, hold ;  
I bar you both ; my body interpos'd.  
Now let me see which of you dares to strike.  
By Jove you've stirr'd the old man !—that rash arm  
That first advances, moves against the Gods  
And our great king, whose deputy I stand,

LYSIMACHUS.

Some prop'rer time must terminate our quarrel.

HEPHESTION.

And cure the bleeding wounds my honour bears.

CLYTUS.

Some prop'rer time ! 'tis false—no hour is proper ;  
No time, should see a brave man do amiss.  
Say, what's the noble cause of all this madness ?  
What vast ambition blows the dangerous fire ?  
Why a vain, smiling, whining, co'z'ning woman.  
By all my triumphs ! in the heat of youth,  
When towns were sack'd, and beauties prostrate  
lay,  
When my blood boil'd, and nature work'd me  
high,  
Clytus ne'er bow'd his body to such shame ;  
I knew 'em, and despis'd their cobweb arts.  
The whole sex is not worth a soldier's thought.

A T R A G E D Y.

3

LYSIMACHUS.

Our cause of quarrel may to thee seem light ;  
But know, a less has set the world in arms.

CLYTUS.

Yes, Troy they tell us by a woman fell ;  
Curse on the sex, they are the bane of virtue !  
Death ! I'd rather this right arm were lost,  
Than that the king should hear of your imprudence—

What ! on a day thus set apart for triumph !

LYSIMACHUS.

We were indeed to blame.

CLYTUS.

This memorable day !  
When our hot master, whose impatient soul  
Outrides the sun, and sighs for other worlds  
To spread his conquests, and diffuse his glory ;  
Now bids the trumpet for a while be silent,  
And plays with monarchs, whom he us'd to drive ;  
Shall we by broils awake him into rage,  
And rouse the lion, that has ceas'd to roar ?

LYSIMACHUS.

Clytus thou'rt right—put up thy sword Heph-  
tion :

Had passion not eclips'd the light of reason,  
Untold we might this consequence have seen.

HEPHESTION.

Why has not reason power to conquer love ?  
Why are we thus enslav'd ?

CLYTUS.

Because unman'd ;  
Because ye follow Alexander's steps.

Heavens !

#### 4 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

Heav'ns! that a face should thus bewitch his soul,  
 And ruin all that's great and godlike in it:  
 Talk be my bane, yet the old man must talk;  
 Not so he lov'd when he at Issus fought,  
 And join'd in mighty combat with Darius,  
 Whom from his chariot flaming all with gems,  
 He hurl'd to earth, and catch'd th' imperial crown.  
 'Twas not the shaft of love perform'd that feat;  
 He knew no Cupids then. Now mark the change!  
 A brace of rival queens embroil the court;  
 And, while each hand is thus employ'd in beauty,  
 Where has he room for glory?

HEPHESTION.

In his heart.

CLYTUS.

Well said, young minion!—I indeed forgot  
 To whom I spoke—but Syfigambis comes.  
 Now is your time, for with her comes an idol  
 That claims homage—I'll attend the king.

#### S C E N E II.

LYSIMACHUS, HEPHESTION, SYSIGAMBIS, with a  
 letter, and PARISATIS.

SYSIGAMBIS.

Why will you wound me with your fond com-  
 plaints,  
 And urge a suit that I can never grant?  
 You know, my child, 'tis Alexander's will;  
 Here, he demands you for his lov'd Hephestion.  
 To disobey him might enflame his wrath,  
 And plunge our house in ruins yet unknown.

PARISATIS.

To sooth this god, and charm him into temper,  
 Is there no victim, none but Parisatis?  
 Must I be doom'd to wretchedness and woe,

That

That others may enjoy the conqu'ror's smiles?  
 Oh! if you ever lov'd my royal father—  
 And sure you did, your gushing tears proclaim it—  
 If still his name be dear, have pity on me!  
 He would not thus have forc'd me to despair;  
 Indeed he would not.—Had I beg'd him thus,  
 He would have heard me, e'er my heart was broke.

## SYSIGAMBIS.

When will my sufferings end! O when ye Gods!  
 For sixty rolling years, my soul has stood,  
 The dread vicissitudes of fate unmov'd:  
 I thought 'em your decrees, and therefore yielded:  
 But this last trial, as it springs from folly,  
 Exceeds my suff'rance, and I must complain.

## LYSIMACHUS.

When Syfigambis mourns, no common woe  
 Can be the cause—'tis misery indeed.  
 Yet pardon, mighty queen, a wretched prince,  
 Who thus presumes to plead the cause of love.  
 Beyond my life, beyond the world [*Kneeling.*] I  
     prize  
 Fair Parisatis—Hear me, I conjure you!  
 As you have autoriz'd Hephestion's vows,  
 Reject not mine—grant me but equal leave  
 To serve the princess, and let love decide.

## HEPHESTION.

A blessing like the beauteous Parisatis  
 Whole years of service, and the world's wide em-  
     pire,  
 With all the blood that circles in our veins,  
 Can never merit; therefore in my favour  
 I beg'd the king, to interpose his int'rest;  
 Therefore, I beg'd your majesty's assistance;  
 Your word is past, and all my hopes rest on't.

## LYSIMA-

6 . ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

LYSIMACHUS, *rising*.

Perish such hopes ! for love's a gen'rous passion  
Which seeks the happiness of her we love,  
Beyond th' enjoyment of our own desires,  
Nor kings nor parents here have ought to do.  
Love owns no influence, and disdains controul ;  
Let 'em stand neuter—'tis all I ask.

HEPHESTION.

Such arrogance did Alexander woo,  
Would lose him all the conquests he has won.

LYSIMACHUS.

To talk of conquests well becomes the man  
Whose life and sword are but his rival's gift.

SYSIGAMBIS.

It grieves me, brave Lyfimachus, to find  
My power fall short of my desires to serve you ;  
You know Hephestion first declar'd his love,  
And 'tis as true, I promis'd him my aid.  
Your glorious king, his mighty advocate,  
Became himself an humble suppliant for him.  
Forget her, prince, and triumph o'er your passion :  
A conquest worthy of a soul like thine.

LYSIMACHUS.

Forget her ! madam : sooner shall the sun  
Forget to shine, and tumble from his sphere.  
Farewel, great queen—my honour now demands  
That Alexander should himself explain  
The wond'rous merit which exalts his fav'rite,  
And casts Lyfimachus at such a distance.

[*Exit* LYSIMACHUS.]

S C E N E

# A T R A G E D Y.

7

## S C E N E III.

SYSIGAMBIS, PARISATIS, HEPHESTION.

In this wild transport of ungovern'd passion  
Too far I fear he will incense the king.  
Is Alexander yet, my Lord, arriv'd ?

HEPHESTION.

Madam, I know not, but Cassander comes,  
He may perhaps inform us.

SYSIGAMBIS.

I would shun him.  
Something there is, I know not why, that shocks me,  
Something my nature shrinks at, when I see him.

## S C E N E IV.

CASSANDER.

The face of day now blushes scarlet deep :  
Now blackens into night. The low'ring sun,  
As if the dreadful business he foreknew,  
Drives heavily his sable chariot on.  
How fierce it lightens ! how it thunders round me !  
All nature seems alarm'd for Alexander.  
Why be it so. Her pangs proclaim my triumph.  
My soul's first wishes are to startle fate,  
And strike amazement thro' the host of heav'n.  
A mad Chaldean with a flaming torch,  
Came to my bed last night, and bellowing o'er me,  
Well had it been, he cry'd, for Babylon,  
If curst Cassander never had been born.

## S C E N E V.

THESSALUS with a packet.

How now, dear Thessalus, what packet's that ?

THESSALUS.

From Macedon, a trusty slave just brought it.  
Your father chides us for our cold delay ;

He

## 8 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

He says Craterus, by the king's appointment,  
Comes, in his room, to govern Macedon,  
Which nothing but the tyrant's death can hinder:  
Therefore he bids us boldly strike,  
Or quit our purpose, and confess our fears.

CASSANDER.

Is not his fate resolv'd? this night he dies;  
And thus my father but forestalls my purpose.  
How am I slow then? If I rode on thunder,  
Wing'd as the light'ning, it would ask some mo-  
ments,  
Ere I could blast the growth of this Colossus.

THESSALUS.

Mark where the haughty Polyperchon comes!  
Some new affront by Alexander given,  
Swells in his heart, and stings him into madness.

CASSANDER.

Now, now's our time; he must, he shall be ours;  
His haughty soul will kindle at his wrongs,  
Blaze into rage, and glory in revenge.

### SCENE VI.

CASSANDER, THESSALUS, POLYPERCHON.

POLYPERCHON.

Still as I pass, fresh murmurs fill my ears;  
All talk of wrongs, and mutter their complaints.  
Poor soul-less reptiles!—their revenge expires  
In idle threats.—The fortitude of cowards!  
Their province is to talk! 'tis mine to act,  
And shew this tyrant, when he dar'd to wrong me,  
He wrong'd a man whose attribute is vengeance.

CASSANDER.

All nations bow their heads with servile bondage,  
And kiss the feet of this exalted man.

The

The name, the shout, the blast from ev'ry mouth  
Is Alexander! Alexander stuns  
The list'ning ear, and drowns the voice of heav'n.  
The earth's commanders fawn like crouching  
spaniels;  
And if this hunter of the barbarous world,  
But wind himself a god; all echo him,  
With universal cry.

POLYPERCHON.

I fawn, or echo him,  
Cassander, no! my soul disdains the thought!  
Let eastern slaves or prostituted Greeks  
Crouch at his feet, or tremble if he frown.  
When Polyperchon can descend so low,  
False to that honour, which thro' fields of death,  
I still have courted, where the fight was fiercest,  
Be scorn my portion, infamy my lot.

THESSALUS.

The king may doom me to a thousand tortures.  
Ply me with fire, and rack me like Philotas,  
E're I shall stoop to idolize his pride.

CASSANDER.

Not Aristander, had he rais'd all hell,  
Cou'd more have shock'd my soul, than thou hast  
done,  
By the bare mention of Philotas' murder,  
O Polyperchon! how shall I describe it!  
Did not your eyes rain blood to see the hero?  
Did not your spirits burst with smother'd vengeance,  
To see thy noble fellow warrior tortur'd?  
Yet, without groaning, or a tear, endure  
The torments of the damn'd? O death to think it!  
We saw him bruis'd, we saw his bones laid bare;  
His veins wide lanc'd, and the poor quiv'ring flesh

C

With

to ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

With fiery pincers from his bosom torn.  
Till all beheld where the great heart lay panting.

POLYPERCHON.

Yet all like statues stood !—cold lifeless statues !  
As if the sight had froze us into marble.  
When, with collected rage, we should have flown  
To instant vengeance on the ruthless cause,  
And plung'd a thousand daggers in his heart.

CASSANDER.

At our last banquet, when the bowl had gone  
The giddy round, and wine inflam'd my spirits ;  
I saw Craterus and Hephestion enter  
In Persian robes ; to Alexander's health  
They largely drank ; and falling at his feet  
With impious adoration thus address'd  
Their idol god. Hail son of thund'ring Jove !  
Hail first of kings ! young Ammon live for ever !  
Then kiss'd the earth ; on which I laugh'd aloud,  
And scoffing, ask'd 'em, why they kiss'd no harder,  
Whereon the tyrant, starting from his throne ;  
Spurn'd me to earth, and stamping on my neck,  
Learn thou to kiss it, was his fierce reply ;  
While with his foot he press'd me to the earth,  
Till I lay weltring in a foam of blood.

POLYPERCHON.

Thus when I mock'd the Persians that ador'd him,  
He struck me on the face, swung me around,  
And bid his guards chastize me like a slave.  
But if he 'scape my vengeance, may he live,  
Great as that god whose name he thus prophanes,  
And like a slave may I again be beaten,  
Scoff'd as I pass, and branded for a coward.

Cas.

# A T R A G E D Y. 19

CASSANDER.

There spoke the spirit of Calisthenes:  
Remember, he's a man, his flesh as penetrable  
As any girl's, and wounded too as soon;  
To give him death no thunders are requir'd.  
Struck by a stone young Jupiter has fall'n,  
A sword has pierc'd him, and the blood has fol-  
low'd;

Nay, we have seen an hundred common ailments  
Bring this immortal to the gates of death.

POLYPERCHON.

O let us not delay the glorious business!  
Our wrongs are great, and honour calls for ven-  
geance.  
Are your hearts firm?

THESSALUS.

As heav'n or hell can make 'em!

POLYPERCHON.

Take then my hand, and if you doubt my truth,  
Rip up my breast, and lay my heart upon it.

CASSANDER.

While thus we join our hands and hearts together,  
Remember Hermolaus and be hush'd.

POLYPERCHON.

Hush'd as the eve before an hurricane,  
Or baleful planets when they shed their poisons.

CASSANDER.

This day exulting Babylon receives  
The mighty robber—with him comes Roxana,  
Fierce haughty fair! On his return from India,  
Artful she met him in the height of triumph,

And

## **ALEXANDER THE GREAT.**

And by a thousand wiles at Susa kept him,  
In all the luxury of eastern revels.

**POLYPERCHON.**

How bore Statira his revolted love ?  
For, if I err not, e'er the king espous'd her,  
She made him promise to renounce Roxana.

**THESSALUS.**

No words can paint the anguish it occasion'd ;  
Ev'n Sysigambis wept, while the wrong'd queen  
Struck to the heart, fell lifeless on the ground.

**CASSANDER.**

When the first tumult of her grief was laid,  
I sought to fire her into wild revenge ;  
And to that end, with all the art I could,  
Describ'd his passion for the bright Roxana.  
But tho' I could not to my wish inflame her,  
Thus far at least her jealousy will help ;  
She'll give him troubles that perhaps may end him,  
And set the court in universal uproar.  
But see she comes. Our plots begin to ripen.  
Now change the vizer, every one disperse,  
And, with a face of friendship, meet the king,

## **S C E N E VII.**

**SYSIGAMBIS, STATIRA, and PARISATIS.**

**STATIRA.**

O for a dagger, a draught of poison, flames !  
Swell heart, break, break thou wretched stubborn  
thing.  
Now, by the sacred fire, I'll not be held :  
Pray give me leave to walk.

**SYSIGAM-**

# A T R A G E D Y.

7

SYSIGAMBIS.

Unhappy Parisatis !  
Is there no reverence to my person due ?  
Trust me, Statira, had thy father liv'd,  
Darius wou'd have heard me.

STATIRA.

O he's false.  
This glorious man, this wonder of the world,  
Is to his love, and ev'ry god foresworn.  
O I have heard him breathe such ardent vows,  
Out-weep the morning with his dewy eyes,  
And sigh and swear the list'ning stars away.

SYSIGAMBIS.

Believe not rumour, 'tis impossible.  
Thy Alexander is renown'd for truth ;  
Above deceit—

STATIRA.

Away, and let me die.  
'Twas but my fondness, 'twas my easy nature  
Wou'd have excus'd him—but away such weakness.  
Are not his falsehoods, and Statira's wrongs,  
A subject canvass'd in the mouth of millions ?  
The babbling world can talk of nothing else.  
Why, Alexander, why wouldst thou deceive me !  
Have I not lov'd thee, cruel as thou art !  
Have I not kiss'd thy wounds with dying fondness,  
Bath'd 'em in tears, and bound 'em with my hair !  
Whole nights I've sat and watch'd thee as a child,  
Lull'd thy fierce pains, and sung thee to repose.

PARISATIS.

If man can thus renounce the solemn ties  
Of sacred love, fidelity and truth,  
Who wou'd regard his vows ?

STA-

10 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

STATIRA.

Regard his vows, the monster, traitor ! Oh !  
I will forsake the haunts of men, converse  
No more with aught that's human ; dwell with  
darkness ;  
For since the sight of him is now unwelcome,  
What has the world to give Statira joy ?  
Yet I must tell thee, perjur'd as he is,  
Not the soft breezes of the genial spring,  
The fragrant violet, or op'ning rose,  
Are half so sweet as Alexander's breath :  
Then he will talk—good gods how he will talk !  
He speaks the kindest words, and looks such things,  
Vows with such passion, and swears with such a  
grace,  
That it is heav'n to be deluded by him.

SYSIGAMBIS.

Her sorrows must have way. Alas my child !

STATIRA.

Roxana then enjoys my perjur'd love ;  
Roxana clasps my monarch in her arms,  
Doats on my conqu'ror, my dear lord, my king.  
Oh 'tis too much ! by Heav'n I cannot bear it !  
I'll die, or rid me of the burning torture.  
Hear me, bright god of day, hear ev'ry god.

SYSIGAMBIS.

Take heed, Statira ; weigh it well, my child,  
Ere desperate love enforces you to swear.

STATIRA.

O fear not that, already have I weigh'd it ;  
And in the presence here of Heav'n and you,  
Renounce all converse with perfidious man.  
Farewel ye cozeners of our easy sex !

And

And thou the falsest of the faithless kind,  
 Farewel for ever ! O farewel ! farewel !  
 If I but mention him the tears will flow.  
 How cou'dst thou, cruel, wrong a heart like mine,  
 Thus fond, thus doting, ev'n to madness, on thee !

SYSIGAMBIS.

Clear up thy griefs, thy Alexander comes,  
 Triumphant in the spoils of conquer'd India ;  
 This day the hero enters Babylon.

STATIRA.

Why let him come : all eyes will gaze with rapture ;  
 All hearts will joy to see the victor pass,  
 All but the wretched the forlorn Statira.

SYSIGAMBIS.

Wilt thou not see him then ?

PARISATIS.

Not see the king !

STATIRA.

I swear, and Heav'n be witness to my vow, [*Kneels.*]  
 Never from this sad hour, never to see,  
 Nor speak, no, nor, if possible, to think  
 Of Alexander more : this is my vow,  
 And when I break it—

SYSIGAMBIS.

Do not ruin all !

STATIRA.

May I again be perjur'd and deluded !  
 May furies rend my heart ! may light'nings blast  
 me !

SYSIGAMBIS.

Recall, my child, the dreadful imprecation.

STA-

16 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

STATIRA.

No, I will publish it thro' all the court ;  
Then to the bow'rs of great Semiramis,  
Retire for ever from the treacherous world.  
There from man's sight will I conceal my woes,  
And seek in solitude a calm repose :  
Nor pray'rs, nor tears, shall my resolves controul,  
Nor love itself, that tyrant of the soul.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

## A C T II.

CASSANDER, POLYPERCHON.

CASSANDER.

**H**E comes, the headlong Alexander comes;  
 The Gods forbid him Babylon in vain;  
 In vain do prodigies foretell his fall,  
 Attended by a throng of scepter'd slaves,  
 This rapid conqu'ror of the ravag'd globe,  
 Makes his appearance, and defies the danger.

POLYPERCHON.

Why all this noise—ye partial powers declare—  
 These starts of nature, at a tyrant's doom?  
 Is Alexander of such wond'rous moment,  
 That heav'n should feel the wild alarms of fear,  
 And fate itself become a babbler for him?

CASSANDER.

Cas'd in the very arms we saw him wear,  
 The spirit of his father haunts the court,  
 In all the majesty of solemn sorrow.  
 The awful spectre fix'd his eyes upon me,  
 Wav'd his pale hand—and, threatful shook his  
                   head,  
 Groan'd out, forbear, and vanish'd from my view.  
 A fear till then unknown possess'd my soul.  
 And sick'ning nature trembled at the sight!

POLYPERCHON.

Why should you tremble?—Had the yawning  
                   earth  
 Laid all the tortures of the damn'd before me,

B

My

18 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

My soul, unshaken in her firm resolve,  
Wou'd brave those tortures, and pursue the tyrant.

CASSANDER.

Yes, Polyperchon, he this night shall die ;  
Our plots, in spite of prodigies, advance ;  
Success attends us.—Oh, it joys my soul !  
To deal destruction like the hand of Heav'n,  
Felt while unseen.

POLYPERCHON.

Ay there's the thing, Cassander.  
Fear and distraction thro' the court prevail ;  
The Persians all dissatisfied appear ;  
Loudly they murmur at Statira's wrongs,  
And fiercely censure Alexander's falsehood.

CASSANDER.

I know he loves Statira more than life ;  
And when he hears the solemn vow she made,  
The oath that bars her from his sight for ever,  
Remorse and horror will at once invade him,  
Rend his wreck'd soul, and rush him into madness.

POLYPERCHON.

Of that anon—the court begins to thicken ;  
From ev'ry province of the wide spread earth,  
Ambassadors in Babylon are met ;  
As if mankind had previously agreed  
To compliment the tyrant's boundless pride,  
And hold a solemn synod of the world,  
Where Alexander like a god should dictate.

CASSANDER.

We must away, or mingle with the crowd,  
Adore this god till apt occasion calls,  
To make him what he wou'd be thought—immor-  
tal.

SCENE

## S C E N E II.

A Symphany of warlike Music.

CLYTUS, ARISTANDER, in his Robes.

ARISTANDER.

Haste, reverend Clytus, haste and stop the king.

CLYTUS.

Already is he enter'd, and the throng  
Of princes that surround him is so great,  
They keep at distance all that would approach.

ARISTANDER.

Were he encircled by the gods themselves,  
I must be heard, for death awaits his stay.

CLYTUS,

Place yourself here then, for behold he comes.

## S C E N E III.

Alexander in a triumphal Carr, drawn by black  
slaves. Trophies and warlike Ensigns in pro-  
cession before him. Clytus, Hephestion, Lysimachus,  
Aristander, Captives, Guards, and Attendants.

See the conqu'ring hero comes,  
Sound the trumpet, beat the drums;  
Sports prepare, the laurel bring,  
Sports of triumph to him sing.

D 2

See

20 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

See the godlike youth advance,  
Breath the flute, and lead the dance;  
Myrtle wreath, and roses twine,  
To deck the hero's brow divine.

HEPHESTION.

Hail, son of Jove! great Alexander hail!

ALEXANDER.

Rise all; and thou, my second self, my friend,  
O my Hephestion! raise thee from the earth!  
Come to my arms, and hide thee in my heart;  
Nearer, yet nearer, else thou lov'st me not.

HEPHESTION.

Not love my king! bear witness all ye powers,  
And let your thunder nail me to the centre,  
If sacred friendship ever burn'd more brightly!  
Immortal bosoms can alone admit  
A flame more pure, more permanent than mine.

ALEXANDER.

Thou dearer to me than my groves of laurel,  
I know thou lov'st thy Alexander more  
Than Clytus does the king.

LYSIMACHUS.

Now for my fate!  
I see that death awaits me—yet I'll on.  
Dread sir, I cast me at your royal feet.

ALEXANDER.

Rise, my Lysimachus; thy veins and mine,  
From the same fountain have deriv'd their streams,  
Is not that Clytus—

Cly.

CLYTUS.

Your old faithful soldier.

ALEXANDER.

Clytus, thy hand.—Thus, double arm'd, methinks  
I stand tremendous as the Lybian God,  
Who, while his priests and I quaff'd sacred blood,  
Acknowledge'd me his son. My light'ning thou,  
And thou my mighty thunder. I have seen  
Thy glitt'ring sword out-fly celestial fire ;  
And when I've cry'd, begone and execute,  
I've seen him run swifter than starting hinds,  
Nor bent the tender grass beneath his feet.

LYSIMACHUS.

When fame invites, and Alexander leads,  
Dangers and toils but animate the brave.

CLYTUS.

Perish the soldier inglorious and despis'd,  
Who starts from either, when the king cries—on.

ALEXANDER.

O Clytus ! O my noble veteran !  
'Twas, I remember, when I pass'd the Granicus,  
Thy arm preserv'd me, from unequal force.  
When fierce Icanor and the bold Rhesaces,  
Fell both upon me, with two mighty blows,  
And clove my temper'd helmet quite asunder,  
Then, like a God, flew Clytus to my aid,  
Thy thunder struck Rhesaces to the ground,  
And turn'd with ready vengeance on Icanor.

CLYTUS.

To your own deeds that victory you owe,  
And sure your arms did never boast a nobler.

ALEX-

## 22 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

ALEXANDER.

By Heav'n they never did : they never can :  
 And I am prouder to have pass'd that stream,  
 Than to have drove a million o'er the plain.  
 Can none remember? Yes, I know all must ;  
 When glory, like the dazzling eagle, stood  
 Perch'd on my beaver in the Granick flood ;  
 When fortune's self my standard trembling bore,  
 And the pale fates stood frighted on the shore ;  
 When each immortal on the billows rode,  
 And I myself appear'd the leading God.

ARISTANDER.

Halte, first of heroes, from this fatal place ;  
 Far, far from Babylon, enjoy your triumph,  
 Or all the glories, which your youth has won,  
 Are blasted in their spring,

ALEXANDER.

What mean thy fears ?  
 And why that wild distraction on thy brow ?

ARISTANDER.

This morn, great king, I view'd the angry sky,  
 And, frighted at the direful prodigies,  
 To Orosmales for instruction flew ;  
 But as I pray'd, deep echoing groans I heard,  
 And shrieks as of the damn'd that howl for sin.  
 Shock'd at the omen, while amaz'd I lay,  
 In prostrate rev'rence on the trembling floor,  
 Thus, in a voice like thunder, spoke the God ;  
 The brightest glory of imperial man,  
 The pride of nations, and the boast of fame,  
 Remorseless fate in Babylon has doom'd  
 To sudden and irrevocable ruin.

ALEX.

ALEXANDER.

If Heaven ordains that Babylon must fall,  
Can I prevent th' immutable decree?

SCENE IV.

ALEXANDR, CLYTUS, LYSIMACHUS, PERDICCAS.

PERDICCAS.

O horror! horror! Dreadful and portentous!

ALEXANDER.

How now Perdiccas, whence this exclamation?

PERDICCAS.

As Meleager and myself this morn,  
Led forth the Persian horse to exercise,  
We heard a noise as of a rushing wind;  
When suddenly a flight of baleful birds,  
Like a thick cloud, obscur'd the face of heav'n:  
On sounding wings from diff'rent parts they flew,  
Encount'ring met, and battled in the air;  
Their talons clash'd, their beaks gave mighty  
blows,  
And show'rs of blood fell copious from their  
wounds.

ALEXANDER.

Though all the curtains of the sky were drawn,  
And the stars wink, young Ammon shall go on;  
While my Statira shines I cannot stay,  
Love lifts his torch to light me on my way,  
And her bright eyes create another day.

LYSIMACHUS.

Vouchsafe, dread sir, to hear my humble suit,  
A prince intreats it, and, what's more, your kins-  
man.

ALEX-

24 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

ALEXANDER.

A foldier asks it, that's the noblest claim.

LYSIMACHUS.

For all the services my sword has done,  
Humbly I beg the princess Parisatis.

ALEXANDER.

Lyfimachus no more—it is not well.—  
My word, you know, was to Hephestion giv'n ;  
How dare you then—but let me hear no more on't.

LYSIMACHUS.

At your command to scale th' embattled wall,  
Or fetch the gore-dy'd standard from the foe,  
When has Hephestion flown with warmer zeal ?  
When did he leave Lyfimachus behind ?  
These I have done, for these were in my pow'r ;  
But when you charge me to renounce my love,  
And from my thoughts to banish Parisatis ;  
Obedience there becomes impossible,  
Nature revolts, and my whole soul rebels.

ALEXANDER.

It does, brave sir !—then hear me, and be dumb.  
When by my order curst Calisthenes  
Was as a traytor doom'd to live in torments,  
Your pity sped him in despite of me.  
Think not I have forgot your insolence ;  
No, tho' I pardon'd it.—Yet, if again  
Thou dar'st to cross me with another crime,  
The bolts of fury shall be doubled on thee.  
In the mean time—think not of Parisatis ;  
For if thou dost—by the immortal Ammon !  
I'll not regard that blood of mine thou shar'st,  
But use thee as the vilest Macedonian.

LYSIMA-

# A T R A G E D Y.

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LYSIMACHUS.

I knew you partial, ere I mov'd my suit ;  
Yet know, it shakes not my determin'd purpose ;  
While I have life and strength to wield a sword,  
I never will forego the glorious claim.

ALEXANDER.

Against my life : ha ! traitor, was it so :  
'Tis said that I am rash, of hasty humour ;  
But I appeal to the immortal Gods,  
If ever petty, poor, provincial lord,  
Had temper like to mine ? My slave, whom I  
Could tread to clay, dares utter bloody threats.

CLYTUS.

Forgive, dread sir, the frantic warmth of love ;  
The noble prince, I read it in his eyes,  
Wou'd die a thousand deaths, to serve his prince,  
And justify his loyalty and truth.

LYSIMACHUS.

I meant his minion there, should feel my arm .  
Love claims his blood, nor shall he live to triumph  
In that destruction that awaits his rival.

ALEXANDER.

I pardon thee, for my old Clytus' sake.  
But if once more, thou mention thy rash love,  
Or dar'st attempt Hephestion's precious life,  
I'll pour such storms of indignation on thee,  
Philotas rack, Calisthenes disgrace,  
Shall be delight to what thou shalt endure.

CLYTUS.

My lord, the aged queen, with Parisatis,  
Come to congratulate your safe arrival.

E

Enter

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SCENE VI.

ALEXANDER, CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, SYSIGAMBIS,  
and PARISATIS.

ALEXANDER.

O thou, the best of women, Sysigambis,  
Source of my joy, blest parent of my love !

SYSIGAMBIS.

In humble duty to the Gods and you,  
Permit us, sir, with gratitude to kneel.  
Thro' you the royal house of Persia shines,  
Rais'd from the depth of wretchedness and ruin,  
In all the splendor of imperial greatness.

ALEXANDER.

To meet me thus was generously done ;  
But still there wants to crown my happiness,  
That treasure of my soul, my dear Statira ;  
Had she but come to meet her Alexander,  
I had been blest indeed.

CLYTUS.

Now who shall dare  
To tell him of the queen's vow ?

ALEXANDER.

How fares  
My love ?—Ha ! none answer me ! all silent !  
A sudden horror, like a bolt of ice,  
Shoots to my heart, and numbs the seat of life.

HEPHESTION.

I would relate it, but my courage fails me.

ALEXANDER.

Why stand you all as you were rooted here ?  
What will none answer ? my Hephestion silent !  
If thou hast any love for Alexander ;

If

If ever I oblig'd thee by my care,  
 When thro' the field of death my eye has watch'd  
 thee,  
 Resolve my doubts, and rescue me from madness.

HEPHESTION.

Your mourning queen has no disease but grief,  
 Occasion'd by the jealous pangs of love.  
 She heard, dread sir, (for what can 'scape a lover)  
 That you, regardless of your vows at Susa,  
 Had to Roxana's charms resign'd your heart,  
 And revell'd in the joys you once forswore.

ALEXANDER.

I own the subtle forcerefs, in my riot,  
 My reason gone, seduc'd me to her bed;  
 But when I wak'd, I shook the Circe off,  
 Tho' the enchantress held me by the arm,  
 And wept and gaz'd with all the force of love :  
 Nor griev'd I less for that which I had done,  
 Than when at Thais suit, enrag'd with wine,  
 I set the fam'd Persepolis on fire.

HEPHESTION.

Your queen Statira, in the rage of grief,  
 And agony of desp'rate love, has sworn,  
 Never to see your majesty again.

ALEXANDER.

O! madam, has she, has Statira sworn,  
 Never to see her Alexander more?  
 Impossible! she cou'd not, wou'd not swear it.  
 Is she not gentle as the guileless infant,  
 Mild as the genial breezes of the spring,  
 And softer than the melting sighs of love?

PARISATIS.

With sorrow, sir, I heard the solemn vow;  
 My mother heard it, and in vain adjur'd her,  
 By every tender motive, to recall it.

E 2

Syr-

28 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

SYSIGAMBIS.

But with that fierceness she repents her wrongs,  
Dwells on your fault, and heightens the offence,  
That I could wish your majesty forget her.

ALEXANDER.

Ha! could you wish me to forget Statira!  
The star, which brightens Alexander's life,  
His guide by day, and goddess of his nights!  
I feel her now; she beats in every pulse,  
Throbs at my heart, and circles with my blood.

SYSIGAMBIS.

Have patience, son, and trust to Heav'n and me;  
If my authority has any influence,  
I will exert it, and she shall be yours.

ALEXANDER.

Haste, madam, haste, if you would have me live.  
Fly, ere, for ever, she abjure the world,  
And stop the sad procession; and Parisatis,  
Hang thou about her, wash her feet with tears.  
Nay, haste; the breath of Gods, and eloquence  
Of angels, go along with you. Oh! my heart!

S C E N E V.

LYSIMACHUS, ALEXANDER, CLYTUS.

LYSIMACHUS.

Now let your majesty, who feels the pangs  
Of disappointed love, reflect on mine.

ALEXANDER.

Ha!

CLYTUS.

What are you mad? Is this a time to plead?

LYS-

# A T R A G E D Y.

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LYSIMACHUS.

The proper'st time ; he dares not now be partial,  
Left Heav'n, in justice, should avenge my wrongs,  
And double ev'ry pang which he feels now.

ALEXANDER.

Why dost thou tempt me thus to thy undoing ?  
Death thou shouldst have, were it not courted so.  
But know, to thy confusion, that my word,  
Like destiny, admits of no repeal :  
Therefore in chains shalt thou behold the nuptials  
Of my Hephestion. Guards, take him prisoner.

LYSIMACHUS.

Away, ye slaves, I'll not resign my sword,  
Till first I've drench'd it in my rival's blood.

ALEXANDER.

I charge you kill him not ; take him alive :  
The dignity of kings is now concern'd,  
And I will find a way to tame this rebel.

CLYTUS.

Kneel—for I see rage light'ning in his eyes.

LYSIMACHUS.

I neither hope, nor will I sue for pardon ;  
Had I my sword and liberty again,  
Again I would attempt his favourite's heart.

ALEXANDER.

Hence, from my sight, and bear him to a dungeon.  
Perdiccas, give this lion to a lion ;  
None speak for him ; fly ; stop his mouth, away.

S C E N E

**ALEXANDER THE GREAT.**

**SCENE VI.**

**CLYTUS, ALEXANDER, HEPHESTION.**

**CLYTUS.**

This comes of women—the result of love.  
Yet were I heated now with wine, I doubt  
I should be preaching in this fool's behalf.

**ALEXANDER.**

Come hither, Clytus, and my friend Hephestion;  
Lend me your arms, for I am sick o' th' sudden.  
I fear, betwixt Statira's cruel vows,  
And fond Roxana's arts, your king will fall.

**CLYTUS.**

Better the race of women were destroyed,  
And Persia sunk in everlasting ruin.

**HEPHESTION.**

Look up, my lord, and bend not thus your head,  
As if you purpos'd to forsake the world,  
Which you have greatly won.

**ALEXANDER.**

Wou'd I had not;  
There's no true joy in such unweildy fortune.  
Eternal gazers lasting troubles make;  
All find my spots, but few observe my brightness.  
Stand from about me all, and give me air!  
Yes, I will shake this Cupid from my soul;  
I'll fight the feeble God with war's alarms,  
Or drown his pow'r in fields of hostile blood.  
Grant me, great Mars, once more in arms to shine,  
And break, like light'ning, thro' th' embattled line;  
Thro' fields of death to whirl the rapid carr,  
And blaze amidst the thunder of the war;  
Resistless as the bolt that rends the grove,  
Or greatly perish like the son of Jove.

**END OF THE SECOND ACT.**

## A C T III. S C E N E I.

An open Court. Trumpets founding a dead March.

LYSIMACHUS led prisoner. EUMENES, PERDICCAS,  
PARISATIS, and Guards.

PARISATIS.

Stay, my Lysimachus! a moment stay!  
O whither art thou going!—Hold a moment!  
Unkind! thou know'st my life was wrapt in thine,  
Why would'st thou then to worse than death ex-  
pose me?

LYSIMACHUS.

O may'st thou live in joys without allay!  
Grant it, ye Gods! a better fortune waits thee;  
Live and enjoy it—'tis my dying wish.  
While to the grave the lost Lysimachus  
Alone retires, and bids the world adieu.

PARISATIS.

Even in that grave will Parisatis join thee:  
Yes, cruel man! not death itself shall part us;  
A mother's pow'r, a sister's soft'ning tears,  
With all the fury of a tyrant's frown,  
Shall not compel me to outlive thy loss.

LYSIMACHUS.

Were I to live till nature's self decay'd,  
This wond'rous waste of unexampled love,  
I never could repay.—O Parisatis!  
Thy charms might fire a coward into courage;  
How must they act then on a soul like mine?  
Defenceless and unarm'd, I fight for thee,  
And may, perhaps, compel th' astonish'd world,

And

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And force the king to own that I deserve thee:  
Eumenes, take the princeſs to thy charge;  
Away, Perdiccas, all my ſoul's on fire.

S C E N E II. The Palace.

ROXANA, CASSANDER.

ROXANA.

Deſerted ! ſaid'ſt thou ? for a girl abandon'd !  
A puny girl made up of watry elements !  
Shall ſhe embrace the god of my deſires,  
And triumph in the heart Roxana claims ?

CASSANDER.

O princeſs ! had you ſeen his wild deſpair !  
Had you beheld him when he heard her vow,  
Words wou'd but wrong the agonies he felt :  
He fainted thrice, and life ſeem'd fled for ever ;  
And when by our affiduous care recall'd,  
He ſnatch'd his ſword, and aim'd it at his breaſt,  
Then rail'd at you with moſt unheard of curſes.

ROXANA.

If I forget it, may'ſt thou, Jove, deprive me  
Of vengeance, make me the moſt wretched thing  
On earth, while living, and when dead, the loweſt  
And blackeſt of the fiends.

CASSANDER.

Oh nobly ſaid,  
Juſt is the vengeance which inflames your ſoul ;  
Your wrongs demand it—but let reaſon govern,  
This wild rage elſe may diſappoint your aims.

ROXANA.

Away, away, and give a whirlwind room ;  
Madneſs but meanly represents my toil ;  
Pride, indignation, fury and contempt,  
War in my breaſt, and torture me to madneſs.

Cas-

CASSANDER.

O think not I wou'd check your boldest flights;  
No—I approve 'em, and will aid your vengeance.  
But, princess, let us chuse the safest course,  
Or we may give our foes new cause of triumph,  
Should they discover, and prevent our purpose.

ROXANA.

Fear not, Cassander, nothing shall prevent it;  
Roxana dooms him, and her voice is fate.  
My soul from childhood has aspir'd to empire;  
In early non-age I was us'd to reign  
Among my she companions: I despis'd  
The trifling arts, and little wiles of women,  
And taught 'em, with an Amazonian spirit,  
To win the steed, to chase the foaming boar,  
And conquer man, the lawless charter'd savage.

CASSANDER.

Her words, her looks, her every motion fires me!

ROXANA.

But when I heard of Alexander's fame,  
How with a handful he had vanquish'd millions,  
Spoil'd all the East, and captive held our queens;  
While, like a god, unconquer'd by their charms,  
With heav'nly pity he asswag'd their woes,  
Dry'd up their tears, and sooth'd 'em into peace;  
I hung attentive on my father's lips,  
And wish'd him tell the wond'rous tale again.  
No longer pleasing were my former sports;  
Love had its turn, and all the woman reign'd.  
Involuntary sighs heav'd in my breast,  
And glowing blushes crimson'd on my cheek;  
Ev'n in my slumbers I have often mourn'd,  
In plaintive sounds, and murmur'd Alexander.

F

CAS-

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CASSANDER.

Curse on his name—he dotes upon him still.

ROXANA.

At length this conqueror to Zogdia came,  
And, cover'd o'er with laurels, storm'd the city :  
But, Oh ! Cassander, where shall I find words  
To paint the extatic transports of my soul !  
When, midst a circle of unrival'd beauties,  
I saw myself distinguish'd by the hero.  
With artless rapture I receiv'd his vows,  
The warmest sure that ever lover breath'd,  
Of fervent love, and everlasting truth.

CASSANDER.

And need you then be told, those times are past !  
Statira now engrosses all his thoughts :  
The Persian queen, without a rival, reigns  
Sole mistress of his heart—nor can thy charms,  
The brightest sure that ever woman boasted,  
Nor all his vows of everlasting love,  
Secure Roxana from disdain and insult.

ROXANA.

O ! thou hast rous'd the lion in my soul ;  
Ha ! shall the daughter of Darius hold him ?  
Shall that weak Semele embrace my Jove ?

CASSANDER.

Oh queen ! exert, exert that tow'ring spirit,  
By nature form'd to keep the world in awe.

ROXANA.

Yes, 'tis resolv'd ; I will resume my sphere,  
Or, falling, spread a general ruin round me.  
Roxana and Statira, they are names

That

That must for ever jarr, like clashing clouds ;  
When they encounter, thunders must ensue.

CASSANDER.

Behold, she comes, in all the pomp of sorrow,  
Determin'd to fulfil her solemn vow !

### S C E N E III.

ROXANA, SYSIGAMBIS, STATIRA.

ROXANA.

Away, and let us mark th' important scene.

SYSIGAMBIS.

O my Statira ! how has passion chang'd thee !  
Think in the rage of disappointed love,  
If treated thus, and hurried to extremes,  
What Alexander may denounce against us ;  
Against the poor remains of lost Darius !

STATIRA.

O fear not that, I know he will be kind,  
For my sake kind, to you and Parifatis.  
Tell him I rail'd not at his falsehood to me,  
But with my parting breath spoke kindly of him ;  
Tell him I wept at our divided loves,  
And, sighing, sent a last forgiveness to him.

SYSIGAMBIS.

No ; I can ne'er again presume to meet him,  
Never approach the much-wrong'd Alexander,  
If thou refuse to see him—O Statira !  
Thy aged mother, and thy weeping country,  
Claim thy regard, and challenge thy compassion ;  
Hear us, my child, and lift us from despair.

F 2

STA-

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STATIRA.

Thus low, I cast me at your royal feet,  
To bath them with my tears ; or, if you please,  
I'll let out life, and wash 'em with my blood.  
But, I conjure you, not to rack my soul,  
Nor hurry my wild thoughts to perfect madness ;  
Should now Darius' awful ghost appear,  
And you, my mother, stand beseeching by,  
I would persist to death, and keep my vow.

ROXANA.

This fortitude of soul compels my wonder.

SYSIGAMBIS.

Hence, from my sight ! ungrateful wretch, be  
gone !  
And hide thee where bright virtue never shone ;  
For, in the fight of Heaven, I here renounce,  
And cast thee off an alien to my blood.

SCENE IV.

ROXANA, STATIRA.

ROXANA.

Forgive, great queen, th' intrusion of a stranger ;  
With grief Roxana sees Statira weep ;  
I've heard, and much applaud your fix'd resolve,  
To quit the world for Alexander's sake ;  
And yet I fear, so greatly he adores you,  
That he will rather chuse to die of sorrow,  
Than live for the despis'd Roxana's charms.

STATIRA.

Spare, madam, spare your counterfeited fears ;  
You know your beauty, and have prov'd its pow'r ;  
Tho' humbly born, have you not captive held,

In love's soft chains, the conqueror of the world ?  
 Away to libertines, and boast thy conquest ;  
 A shameful conquest : in his hours of riot,  
 When wine prevail'd, and virtue lost its influence,  
 Then, only then, Roxana could surprize  
 My Alexander's heart.

ROXANA.

Affected girl,  
 To some romantic grove's sequester'd gloom,  
 Thy sickly virtue wou'd, it seems, retire,  
 To shun the triumphs of a favour'd rival.  
 In vain thou fly'st—for there, ev'n there I'll haunt  
 thee !  
 Plague thee all day, and torture thee all night :  
 There shalt thou hear, in what extatic joys,  
 Roxana revels with the first of men ;  
 And as thou hear'st the rapt'rous scene recited,  
 With frantic jealousy thou'lt madly curse  
 Thy own weak charms, that cou'd not fix the  
 rover.

STATIRA.

How weak is woman ! at the storm she shrinks,  
 Dreads the drawn sword, and trembles at the thun-  
 der ;  
 Yet when strong jealousy inflames her soul,  
 The sword may glitter, and the tempest roar,  
 She scorns the danger, and provokes her fate.  
 Rival, I thank thee.—Thou hast fir'd my soul,  
 And rais'd a storm beyond thy pow'r to lay ;  
 Soon shalt thou tremble at the dire effects,  
 And curse, too late, the folly that undid thee.

ROXANA.

Sure the disdain'd Statira dares not mean it.

STA-

# 38 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

STATIRA.

By all my hopes of happiness I dare :  
And know, proud woman, what a mother's  
threats,  
A sister's sighs, and Alexander's tears,  
Cou'd not effect, thy rival rage hath done:  
I'll see the king, in spite of all I swore,  
Tho' curst, that thou may'st never see him more.

## SCENE V.

ALEXANDR, HEPHESTION, CLYTUS, STATIRA,  
ROXANA.

ALEXANDER.

O my Statira!—thou relentless fair!  
Turn thine eyes on me—I would talk to them :  
What shall I say to work upon thy soul ?  
What words, what looks, can melt thee to for-  
giveness?

STATIRA.

Talk of Roxana, and the conquer'd Indies ;  
Thy great adventures, and successful love,  
And I will listen to the rapt'rous tale ;  
But rather shun me, shun a desperate wretch,  
Resign'd to sorrow, and eternal woe.

ALEXANDER.

O! I could die, with transport, die before thee !  
Wou'dst thou but, as I lay convuls'd in death,  
Cast a kind look, or drop a tender tear.  
Say, but 'twas pity, one so fam'd in arms,  
One who has 'scap'd a thousand deaths in battle,  
For the first fault, should fall a wretched victim,  
To jealous anger, and offended love.

Rox-

# A T R A G E D Y.

39

ROXANA.

Am I then fall'n so low in thy esteem,  
That for another thou wou'dst rather die,  
Than live for me?—How am I altered, tell me,  
Since last at Susa, with repeated oaths,  
You swore the conquest of the world, afforded  
Less joy, less glory, than Roxana's love.

ALEXANDER.

Take, take that conquer'd world, dispose of  
crowns,  
And canton out the empires of the globe;  
But leave me, madam, with repentant tears,  
And undissembled sorrows, to atone  
The wrongs I've offer'd to this injur'd excellence.

ROXANA.

Yes, I will go, ungrateful as thou art!  
Bane to my life, and murd'rer of my peace;  
I will be gone; this last disdain has cur'd me.  
But have a care—I warn you not to trust me,  
Or by the Gods that witness to thy perjuries,  
I'll raise a fire, that shall consume you both,  
Tho' I partake the ruin.

## S C E N E VI.

STATIRA, ALEXANDER, SYSIGAMBIS, CLYTUS.

STATIRA.

Alexander!  
Immortal Gods! can guilt appear so lovely?  
Yet, yet I pardon, I forgive thee all.

ALEXANDER.

Forgive me all!—O catch the heav'nly sounds;  
Catch 'em ye winds, and, as you fly, disperse  
The

46 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

The rapt'rous tidings, thro' the extended world,  
That all may share in Alexander's joy.

SYSIGAMBIS.

Now all thy mother's blessing fall upon thee,  
My ever dear, my best belov'd Statira.

ALEXANDER.

Is it then giv'n me, thus to touch thy hand,  
And press thy beauties to my panting bosom,  
To gaze upon thy eyes, and taste thy breath?  
While ev'ry sigh comes forth so fraught with  
sweets,  
'Tis incense to be offer'd to a God.

STATIRA.

Yes, dear deceiver, I forgive thee all,  
But longer dare not hear thy charming tongue;  
For while I hear thee, my resolves give way:  
Be therefore quick, and take thy last farewell;  
Farewel, my love.—Eternally farewell!

ALEXANDER.

O my Hephestion, bear me, or I sink.  
Why, why Statira, will you use me thus?  
I know the cause, my working brain divines it;  
You say you've pardon'd, but with this reserve,  
Never again to bless me with your love.

STATIRA.

All-seeing Heav'n support me.

ALEXANDER.

Speak to me,  
Speak to me, love, tho' banishment and death  
Hang on thy lips, yet while thy tongue pronounces  
The music will a while suspend my pains,  
And mitigate the horrors of despair.  
O! cou'd I see you thus!

STA-

STATIRA.

Why did I swear ! his sorrows wound my heart,  
Soft pity pleads, and I again must love him ;  
But I have sworn, and therefore cannot yield.

ALEXANDER.

Go then, inhuman, triumph in my pains,  
Feed on the pangs that rend this wretched heart,  
For now 'tis plain you never lov'd. Statira !  
O ! I cou'd sound that charming cruel name,  
Till the tir'd echo faint with repetition ;  
Till all the breathless groves, and quiet myrtles,  
Shook with my sighs, as if a tempest bow'd 'em.  
Ever Statira ! nothing but Statira !

STATIRA.

Such was his looks, so melting was his voice,  
Such his soft sighs, and his deluding tears,  
When with that pleasing perjur'd breath avowing,  
His whispers trembled thro' my cred'lous ears,  
And told the story of my utter ruin.  
Gods ! if I stay, I shall again believe :  
Farewel, thou greatest pleasure, greatest pain.

ALEXANDER.

I charge ye, stay her ; stay her by the Gods—  
O turn thee, thou bewitching brightness, turn ;  
Hear my last words, and see my dying pangs.  
Lo ! at your feet, behold a monarch falls,  
A prince, who gave the conquer'd world to thee,  
And thought thy love bought cheaply with the  
gift ;  
Whose glories, laurels, bloom but in thy smiles,  
Now shrunk and blasted by thy cruel hate,  
Untimely falls. Yet, Oh ! when thou shalt die,  
May death be mild as thou art cruel now ;

G

And

42 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

And may thy beauties gently sink to earth,  
While circling angels waft thee to repose.

SYSIGAMBIS.

Art thou turn'd savage? Is thy heart of marble?  
But if this posture move thee not to pity,  
I never will speak more.

ALEXANDER.

O my Statira!

I swear, my queen, I'll not outlive our parting.  
My soul grows still as death. Say, wilt thou  
pardon?

'Tis all I ask. Wilt thou forgive the transports  
Of a deep wounded heart, and all is well?

STATIRA.

Rise, and may Heav'n forgive you, like Statira.

ALEXANDER.

You are too gracious.—Clytus, bear me hence.  
When I am laid i' th' earth yield her the world.  
There's something here, that heaves as cold as ice,  
That stops my breath. Farewel, farewell for ever!

STATIRA.

Hold off, and let me run into his arms:  
My life, my love, my lord, my Alexander,  
If thy Statira's love can give thee joy,  
Revive, and be immortal as the Gods.

ALEXANDER.

My flutt'ring heart, tumultuous with its bliss,  
Would leap into thy bosom: 'tis too much.  
O let me press thee in my eager arms,  
And strain thee hard to my transported breast.

STATIRA.

But shall Roxana—

ALEX-

ALEXANDER.

Let her not be nam'd.

O ! madam how shall I repay your goodness ?  
And you, my fellow warriors, who cou'd weep  
For your lost king ? But talk of griefs no more,  
The banquet waits, and I invite you all.  
My equals in the throne, as in the grave,  
Without distinction come, and share my joy.

CLYTUS.

Excuse me, sir, if I for once am absent.

ALEXANDER.

Excuse thee, Clytus ? none shall be excus'd.  
All revel out the day, 'tis my command.  
Gay as the Persian God ourself will stand,  
With a crown'd goblet in our lifted hand ;  
Young Ammon and Statira shall go round,  
While antic measures beat the burthen'd ground,  
And to the vaulted skies our trumpets clangors  
    sound,

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, EUMENES.

CLYTUS.

**U**RGE me no more, I hate the Persian dress,  
Nor should the king be angry at the  
rev'rence

I owe my country ;—sacred are her customs,  
And honest Clytus will to death observe 'em.  
O let me rot in Macedonian rags,  
Or, like Calisthenes, be cag'd for life,  
Rather than shine in fashions of the East.

EUMENES.

Let me, brave Clytus, as a friend, intreat you

HEPHESTION.

What virtue is there that adorns a throne,  
Exalts the heart, and dignifies the man,  
Which shines not brightly in our royal master ?  
And yet perversely you'll oppose his will,  
And thwart an innocent unhurtful humour.

CLYTUS.

Unhurtful ! Oh ! 'tis monstrous affectation !  
Pregnant with venom, in its nature black,  
And not to be excus'd !—Shall man, weak man,  
Exact the rev'rence which we pay to Heaven !  
And bid his fellow creatures kneel before him,  
And yet be innocent ? Hephestion, no !  
The pride that lays a claim to adoration,  
Insults our reason, and provokes the Gods.

EUMENES

EUMENES.

Yet what was Jove, the God whom we adore?  
Was he not once a man, and rais'd to Heav'n  
For gen'rous acts, and virtues more than human?

HEPHESTION.

By all his thunder, and his sov'reign pow'r,  
I'll not believe the world yet ever felt  
An arm like Alexander's.—Not that God  
You nam'd, tho' riding in a carr of fire,  
Cou'd in a shorter space do greater deeds,  
Or more effectually have taught mankind,  
To bend submissive, and confess his sway.

CLYTUS.

I tell you, boy, that Clytus loves the king  
As well as you, or any soldier here;  
Yet I disdain to sooth his growing pride;  
The hero charms me, but the God offends.

HEPHESTION.

Then go not to the banquet.

CLYTUS.

I was bid,  
Young minion, was I not, as well as you?  
I'll go, my friend, in this old habit, thus,  
And laugh and drink the king's health heartily;  
And while you, blushing, bow your heads to  
earth,  
And hide 'em in the dust—I'll stand erect,  
Straight as a spear, the pillar of my country,  
And be by so much nearer to the Gods.

HEPHESTION.

But see, the king appears.

SCENE

SCENE II.

ALEXANDER, STATIRA, SYSIGAMBIS, PARISATIS,  
and Attendants.

PARISATIS.

Oh gracious monarch!  
Spare him, O spare Lysimachus's life!  
I know you will—the brave delight in mercy.

ALEXANDER.

Shield me, Statira, shield me from her sorrows.

PARISATIS.

Save him, O save him, ere it be too late;  
Speak the kind word, let not your soldier perish,  
For one rash action, by despair occasion'd!  
I'll follow thus, for ever on my knees;  
You shall not pass. Statira! O intreat him!

ALEXANDER.

O! madam, take her, take her from about me!  
Her streaming eyes assail my very soul,  
And shake my best resolves,

STATIRA.

Did I not break  
Thro' all for you? Nay, now my lord, you must,  
By all th' obedience I have paid you long,  
By all your passion, sighs, and tender looks,  
O save a prince, whose only crime is love.

SYSIGAMBIS.

I had not join'd in this bold suit, my son,  
But that it adds new lustre to your honours,

ALEXANDER.

Honour! what's that! has not Statira said it?  
Were I the king of the blue firmament,

And the bold Titans should again make war,  
 Tho' my resistless thunders were prepar'd,  
 By all the Gods she should arrest my arm,  
 Uplifted to destroy 'em. Fly, Hephestion :  
 Fly, Clytus; snatch him from the jaws of death,  
 And to the royal banquet bring him streight,  
 Bring him in triumph, fit for loads of honour.

## S C E N E III.

STATIRA, ALEXANDER.

STATIRA.

O my lov'd lord ! why are you thus obliging,  
 Beyond expression, kind ?

ALEXANDER.

Excellent woman !

'Tis not in nature to support such joy.

STATIRA.

Go, my best love, unbend you at the banquet :  
 Indulge in joy, and laugh your cares away ;  
 While in the bowers of great Semiramis,  
 I dress your bed with all the sweets of nature,  
 And crown it, as the altar of our loves ;  
 Where I will lay me down, and softly mourn,  
 But never close my eyes, till you return.

## S C E N E IV.

ALEXANDER.

Is she not more than mortal can desire ?  
 As Venus lovely, and as Dian chaste ?  
 And yet, I know not why, our parting shocks me ;  
 A ghastly paleness sat upon her brow ;  
 Her voice, like dying echoes, fainter grew ;

And

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And as I wrung her by the rosy fingers,  
Methought the strings of my great heart were  
crack'd :

What could it mean ? Forward, Leomadus.

S C E N E   V.

ALEXANDER, ROXANA, CASSANDER, POLYPER-  
CHON, &c.

Why, madam, gaze you thus ?

ROXANA.

For a last look,  
And to imprint the memory of my wrongs,  
Roxana's wrongs, on Alexander's mind.

ALEXANDER.

On to the banquet.

S C E N E   VI.

ROXANA, CASSANDER, POLYPERCHON

ROXANA.

Ha ! with such disdain !  
So unconcern'd ! O I could tear myself,  
Him, you, and all the hateful world, to atoms :

CASSANDER.

Still keep this spirit up, preserve it still,  
And know us for your friends. We like your rage ;  
'Tis lovely in you, and your wrongs require it ;  
Here, in the sight of Heaven, Cassander swears,  
Unaw'd by death, to second your revenge.  
Speak but the word, and, swift as thought can fly,  
The tyrant falls a victim to your fury.

ROXANA.

Shall he then die ? shall I consent to kill him ?  
I, that have lov'd him with that eager fondness,  
Shall I consent to have him basely murder'd,

And

And see him clasp'd in the cold arms of death?  
 Worlds should not tempt me to the deed of horror.

POLYPERCHON.

The weak fond scruples of your love might pass,  
 Was not the empire of the world concern'd:  
 But, madam, think when time shall teach his  
 tongue,  
 How will the glorious infant, which you bear,  
 Arraign his partial mother, for refusing  
 To fix him on the throne, which here we offer?

CASSANDER.

If Alexander lives, you cannot reign,  
 Nor will your child. Old Syfigambis plans  
 Your sure destruction. Boldly then, prevent her,  
 Give but the word, and Alexander dies.

POLYPERCHON.

Not he alone, the Persian race shall bleed.  
 At your command, one universal ruin,  
 Shall, like a deluge, whelm the Eastern world,  
 Till gloriously we raise you to the throne.

ROXANA.

But, till the mighty ruin be accomplish'd,  
 Where can Roxana fly th' avenging arms  
 Of those who must succeed this godlike man?

CASSANDER.

Wou'd you vouchsafe in these expanded arms  
 To seek a refuge, what cou'd hurt you here?  
 There you might reign, with undiminis'd lustre,  
 Queen of the East, and empress of my soul.

H

Rox.

50 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

ROXANA.

Disgrac'd Roxana ! whither art thou fall'n ?  
Till this curst hour, I never was unhappy :  
There's not one mark of former majesty,  
To awe the slave, that offers at my honour.

CASSANDER.

Impute not, madam, my unbounded passion  
To want of rev'rence—I have lov'd you long.

ROXANA.

Peace, villain, peace, and let me hear no more.  
Think'st thou I'd leave the bosom of a God,  
And stoop to thee, thou moving peace of earth ?  
Hence, from my sight, and never more presume  
To meet my eyes ; for, mark me, if thou dar'st,  
To Alexander I'll unfold thy treason ;  
Whose life, in spite of all his wrongs to me,  
Shall still be sacred, and above thy malice.

CASSANDER.

By your own life, the greatest oath, I swear,  
Cassander's passion from this hour is dumb ;  
And, as the best atonement I can make,  
Statira dies, the victim of your vengeance.

ROXANA.

Cassander, rise, 'tis ample expiation.  
Yes, rival, yes—this night shall be thy last.  
This night, I know, is destin'd for thy triumph ;  
And gives my Alexander to thy arms.  
Oh ! murd'rous thought !

POLYPERCHON.

The bow'rs of great Semiramis are made  
The scene of love ; Perdiccas holds the guard.

1

CAS-

CASSANDER.

Now is your time. While Alexander revels,  
And the whole court re-echoes with his riot,  
To end her, and with her to end your fears,  
Give me but half the Zogdian slaves that wait you,  
And deem her dead. Nor shall a soul escape,  
That serves your rival to disperse the news.

ROXANA.

By me, they die, Perdiccas and Statira ;  
Hence with thy aid, I neither ask nor want it,  
But will myself conduct the slaves to battle :  
Were she to fall by any arm but mine,  
Well might she murmur, and arraign her stars ;  
'Tis life well lost to die by my command ;  
What must it be to perish by my hand ?  
Rival rejoice, and, pleas'd, resign thy breath,  
Roxana's vengeance grants thee noble death.

S C E N E VII.

CASSANDER, POLYPERCHON, PHILIP, THESSALUS.

CASSANDER.

All but her Jove this Semele disdains.  
We must be quick—she may perhaps betray  
The great design, and frustrate our revenge.

POLYPERCHON.

Has Philip got instructions how to act ?

CASSANDER.

He has, my friend ; and, faithful to our cause,  
Resolves to execute the fatal order.  
Bear him this vial—it contains a poison  
Of that exalted force, that deadly nature,  
Shou'd Æsculapius drink it, in five hours

H 2

(For

## 32 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

(For then it works) the God himself were mortal;  
I drew it from Nonacris' horrid spring;  
Mix'd with his wine, a single drop gives death,  
And sends him howling to the shades below.

POLYPERCHON.

I know its power, for I've seen it try'd :  
Pains of all sorts thro' every nerve and artery  
At once it scatters—burns at once and freezes,  
Till, by extremity of torture forc'd,  
The soul consents to leave her joyless home,  
And seek for ease in worlds unknown to this.

CASSANDER.

Now let us part : with Theſſalus and Philip  
Haſte to the banquet—at his ſecond call,  
Let this be given him, and it crowns our hopes;  
Now, Alexander, now we'll ſoon be quits,  
Death for a blow is intereſt indeed.

## SCENE VIII.

ALEXANDER, PERDICCAS, CASSANDER, POLY-  
PERCHON, EUMENES, diſcovered at the Ban-  
quet, &c.

ALEXANDER.

To our immortal health, and our fair queen's :  
All drink it deep; and while the bowl goes round,  
Mars and Belona join to make us muſic.  
An hundred bulls be offer'd to the ſun,  
White as his beams: ſpeak the big voice of war;  
Beat all our drums, and ſound our ſilver trumpets;  
Provoke the Gods to follow our example,  
In bowls of nectar, and replying thunder.

SCENE

## S C E N E IX.

ALEXANDER, PERDICCAS, CASSANDER, POLY-  
PERCHON, EUMENES, CLYTUS, HEPHESTION,  
and LYSIMACHUS bloody.

CLYTUS.

Long live the king; long live great Alexander;  
And conquest crown his arms with deathless laurels,  
Propitious to his friends, and all he favours.

ALEXANDER.

Did I not give command you should preserve  
Lysimachus?

HEPHESTION.

Dread Sir, you did.

ALEXANDER.

What then

Portend these bloody marks?

HEPHESTION.

Ere we arriv'd,

Perdiccas had already plac'd the prince  
In a lone court, all but his hands unarm'd.

CLYTUS.

On them were gauntlets: such was his desire,  
In death to shew the difference betwixt  
The blood of Eacus and common men,  
Forth issuing from his den, amaz'd we saw  
The horrid savage, with whose hideous roar  
The palace shook. His angry eye-balls glaring  
With tripple fury, menac'd death and ruin.

HEPHESTION.

With unconcern the gallant prince advanced:  
Now Parisatis be the glory thine,  
But mine the danger, were his only words;  
For as he spoke, the furious beast descried him,  
And rush'd outrageous to devour his prey.

CLYTUS

## 54 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

CLYTUS.

Agile and vigorous, he avoids the shock  
With a slight blow ; and, as the lion turn'd,  
Thrust gauntlet, arm, and all into his throat,  
And with Herculean strength tears forth the tongue:  
Foaming and bloody, the disabled savage  
Sunk to the earth, and ploughed it with his teeth ;  
While with an active bound your conquering soldier,  
Leap'd on his back, and dash'd his scull in pieces.

ALEXANDER.

By all my laurels 'twas a god-like act ;  
And 'tis my glory, as it shall be thine,  
That Alexander cou'd not pardon thee.  
O ! my brave soldier, think not, all the pray'rs  
And tears of the lamenting queens cou'd move me  
Like what thou hast perform'd ; grow to my breast.

LYSIMACHUS.

Thus, self-condemn'd, and conscious of my guilt,  
How shall I stand such unexampled goodness.  
O pardon, Sir, the transports of despair,  
The frantic outrage of ungovern'd love.  
Even when I shew'd the greatest want of reverence,  
I cou'd have died, with rapture, in your service.

ALEXANDER.

Lysimachus, we both have been transported ;  
But from this hour be certain of my heart.  
A lion be the impress of thy shield,  
And that gold armour we from Porus won,  
Thy king presents thee—but thy wounds ask rest.

LYSIMACHUS.

LYSIMACHUS.

I have no wounds, dread Sir; or, if I had,  
Were they all mortal, they should stream unminded,  
When Alexander was the glorious health.

ALEXANDER.

Thy hand, Hephestion. Clasp him to thy heart,  
And wear him ever near thee. Parisatis  
Shall now be his who serves me best in war.  
Neither reply, but, mark the charge I give:  
Live, live as friends—You will, you must, you shall.  
'Tis a god gives you life.

CLYTUS.

O! monstrous vanity!

ALEXANDER.

Ha! what says Clytus? Who am I?

CLYTUS.

The son

Of good king Philip.

ALEXANDER.

By my kindred gods,  
'Tis false. Great Ammon gave me birth.

CLYTUS.

I've done.

ALEXANDER.

Clytus, what means that dress? Give him a robe  
there.

Take it, and wear it.

CLYTUS.

Sir, the wine, the weather  
Has heated me; besides, you know my humour.

ALEX-

56 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

ALEXANDER.

O, 'tis not well : I'd rather perish, burn,  
Than be so singular and froward.

CLYTUS.

I—

Would burn, hang, drown, but in a better cause;  
I'll drink, or fight for sacred majesty  
With any here. Fill me another bowl.  
Will you excuse me ?

ALEXANDER.

You will be excused,  
But let him have his humour : he is old.

CLYTUS.

So was your father, sir ; this to his mem'ry.  
Sound all the trumpets there.

ALEXANDER.

They shall not sound  
Till the king drinks. Sure, I was born to wage  
Eternal war. All are my enemies ;  
Whom I cou'd tame—But let the sports go on.

LYSIMACHUS.

Nay, Clytus, you that cou'd advise so well.

ALEXANDER.

Let him persist, be positive and proud,  
Envious and fullen 'mongst the nobler souls,  
Like an infernal spirit that hath stole  
From hell, and mingled with the mirth of Gods.

CLYTUS.

When Gods grow hot, no difference I know  
'Twixt them and devils—Fill me Greek wine.—

Yet—

Yet fuller—I want spirits.

ALEX-

ALEXANDER.

Let me have music.

CLYTUS.

Music for boys—Clytus would hear the groans  
Of dying soldiers and the neigh of steeds ;  
Or, if I must be pester'd with shrill sounds,  
Give me cries of matrons in sack'd towns.

HEPHESTION.

Let us Lyfimachus awake the king ;  
A heavy gloom is gathering on his brow.  
Kneel all, with humblest adoration kneel,  
And let a health to Jove's great son go round.

ALEXANDER.

Sound, sound, that all the universe may hear.  
O for the voice of Jove, the world should know  
The kindness of my people.—Rise, O rise,  
My hands, my arms, my heart, are ever yours.

CLYTUS.

I did not kiss the earth, nor must your hand—  
I am unworthy, Sir.

ALEXANDER.

I know thou art :

Thou enviest the great honour of thy master.  
Sit, all my friends. Now let us talk of war ;  
The noblest subject for a soldier's mouth ;  
And speak, speak freely, else you love me not.  
Who, think you, was the greatest general,  
That ever led an army to the field ?

HEPHESTION.

A chief so great, so fortunately brave,  
And justly so renown'd as Alexander,  
The radiant sun, since first his beams gave light,  
Never yet saw, or ever shall again.

I

LYSI-

LYSIMACHUS.

Such was not Cyrus, or the fam'd Alcides,  
Nor great Achilles, whose tempestuous sword  
Laid Troy in ashes, tho' the warring Gods  
Oppos'd him.

ALEXANDER.

O! you flatter me, you flatter me.

CLYTUS.

They do indeed; and yet you love 'em for't;  
But hate old Clytus for his hardy virtue.  
Come, shall I speak a man, with equal bravery,  
A better general, and experter soldier.

ALEXANDER.

I should be glad to learn; instruct me, Sir.

CLYTUS.

Your father, Philip.—I have seen him march  
And fought beneath his dreadful banner, where  
The boldest at this table would have trembled.  
Nay, frown not, Sir, you cannot look me dead.  
When Greeks join'd Greeks, then was the tug of  
war,

The labour'd battle sweat, and conquest bled.  
Why should I fear to speak a bolder truth,  
Than e'er the lying priests of Ammon told you;  
Philip fought men, but Alexander women.

ALEXANDER.

All env'y, spite and envy by the Gods!  
Is then my glory come to this at last,  
To conquer women! Nay, he said the stoutest,  
The stoutest here wou'd tremble at his dangers.  
In all the sickness, all the wounds I bore,  
When from my reins the javelin's head was cur'd,  
Lysimachus, Hephestion, speak Perdiccas,  
Did I once tremble? O! the cursed falshood!

Did

Did I once shake or groan ; or act beneath  
The dauntless resolution of a king ?

LYSIMACHUS.

Wine has transported him.

ALEXANDER.

No, 'tis meer malice.

I was a woman too, at Oxydrace,  
When, planting on the walls a scaling ladder,  
I mounted, spight of show'rs of stones, bars, arrows,  
And all the lumber which they thunder'd down ;  
When you beneath cry'd out, and spread your arms,  
That I should leap among you. Did I so ?

LYSIMACHUS.

Dread Sir, the old man knows not what he says.

ALEXANDER.

Was I a woman, when, like Mercury,  
I leap'd the walls and flew amidst the foe ;  
And, like a baited lion, dy'd myself  
All over in the blood of those bold hunters,  
Till, spent with toil, I battled on my knees,  
Pluckt forth the darts, that made my shield a forest,  
And hurl'd 'em back with most unconquer'd fury ?  
Then, shining in my arms, I sun'd the field ;  
Mov'd, spoke, and fought, and was myself a war.

CLYTUS.

'Twas all bravado. For, before you leap'd,  
You saw that I had burst the gates asunder,

ALEXANDER.

O! that thou wert but once more young and  
vig'rous,  
That I might strike thee prostrate to the earth,  
For this audacious lie, thou feeble dotard.

I 2

CLYTUS.

60 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

CLYTUS.

I know the reason, why you use me thus,  
I sav'd you from the sword of bold Rhefaces,  
Else had your godship slumber'd in the dust;  
And most ungratefully you hate me for it.

ALEXANDER.

Hence from the banquet. Thus far I forgive thee!

CLYTUS.

First try (for none can want forgiveness more)  
To have your own bold blasphemies forgiven,  
The shameful riots of a vicious life.  
Philotas' murder.

ALEXANDER.

Ha! what said the traitor?

HEPHESTION.

Clytus, withdraw; Eumenes, force him hence.  
He must not tarry. Drag him to the door.

CLYTUS.

No, let him send me, if I must be gone,  
To Philip, Atalus, Calisthenes,  
To great Parmenio, and his slaughter'd sons,

ALEXANDER.

Give me a javelin.

HEPHESTION:

Hold, Sir.

ALEXANDER.

Sirrah! off,  
Lest I at once strike thro' his heart and thine.

LYSI-

LYSIMACHUS.

O! sacred Sir, have but a moment's patience:

ALEXANDER.

What! Hold my arms? I shall be murder'd here,  
Like poor Darius, by my barb'rous subjects.  
Perdiccas, found our trumpets to the camp;  
Call all my soldiers to the court. Nay, haste;  
For there is treason plotting 'gainst my life,  
And I shall perish ere they come to save me.  
Begone to Philip, Attalus, Calisthenes, [*Stabs him*]  
And let bold subjects learn by thy example,  
Not to provoke the patience of their prince.

CLYTUS.

The rage of wine is drown'd in gushing blood.  
O Alexander! I have been to blame:  
Hate me not after death. For I repent,  
That I so far have urg'd your noble nature.

ALEXANDER.

What's this I hear! Say on, my dying soldier.

CLYTUS.

I shou'd have kill'd myself, had I but liv'd  
To be once sober:—Now I fall with honour;  
My own hands wou'd have brought foul death:  
O pardon! [*Dies.*]

ALEXANDER.

Then I am lost: what has my vengeance done!  
Who is it thou hast slain? Clytus! what was he?  
The faithfullest subject, worthiest counsellor,  
The bravest soldier, he who sav'd thy life,  
Fighting bare-headed at the river Granick,  
And now he has a noble recompence;  
For a rash word spoke in the heat of wine.

The

62      ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

The poor, the honest Clytus thou hast slain :  
Clytus, thy friend, thy guardian, thy preserver.

HEPHESTION.

Remove the body, it inflames his sorrow.

ALEXANDER.

None dare to touch him ; we must never part :  
Cruel Hephestion and Lysimachus,  
That had the power, yet wou'd not hold me. Oh !

LYSIMACHUS.

Dear Sir, we did.

ALEXANDER.

I know ye did ; ye held me  
Like a wild beast, to let me go again  
With greater violence.—O ye've undone me !  
Excuse it not, you that cou'd stop a lion  
Cou'd not turn me ; ye should have drawn your  
swords,  
And barr'd my rage with their advancing points ;  
Made reason glitter in my dazzled eyes,  
Till I had seen the precipice before me :  
That had been noble, that had shewn the friend ;  
Clytus wou'd so have done to save your lives,

LYSIMACHUS.

When men shall hear how highly you were urg'd—

ALEXANDER.

No ; you have let me stain my rising glory,  
Which else had ended brighter than the sun ;  
O ! I am all a blot, which seas of tears,  
And my heart's blood, can never wash away ;  
Yet 'tis but just I try, and on the point,  
Still reaking, hurl my black polluted breast.

HEPHE-

HEPHESTION.

O! sacred Sir—

LYSIMACHUS.

Forgive my pious hands,  
That dare, in duty, to disarm my master.

ALEXANDER.

Yes, cruel mén, ye now can shew your strength;  
Here's not a slave, but dares oppose my justice,  
Yet none had courage to prevent this murder;  
But I will render all endeavours vain  
That tend to save my life—Here will I lie,  
[Falls on Clytus.

Close to my murder'd soldier's bleeding side.  
Thus clasping his cold body in my arms,  
Till death, like his, has clos'd my eyes for ever.

S C E N E V.

PERDICCAS, HEPHESTION, ALEXANDER, &c.

PERDICCAS.

Treason! foul treason! Hephestion, where's the  
king?

HEPHESTION.

There, by old Clytus' side, whom he hath slain.

PERDICCAS.

Rise, sacred Sir, and haste to save the queen.  
Roxana, fill'd with furious jealousy,  
Came with a guard, unmark'd: she gain'd the bow'r,  
And broke upon me with such sudden fury,  
That all have perish'd who oppos'd her rage.

3.

ALEX-

64 ALEXANDER THE GREAT,

ALEXANDER.

What says Perdiccas? Is the queen in danger?

PERDICCAS.

Haste, Sir, to your Statira, or she dies.

ALEXANDER.

Thus from the grave I rise to save my love;  
All draw your swords, on wings of light'ning  
move,  
Young Ammon leads you, and the cause is love;  
When I rush on, sure none will dare to stay,  
'Tis beauty calls, and glory leads the way.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

## A C T V. S C E N E I.

The Bower of SEMIRAMIS.

STATIRA discovered asleep.

STATIRA.

**B**LESS me, ye pow'rs above, and guard my  
virtue!

Where are you fled, dear shades? Where are  
you fled?

'Twas but a dream, and yet I saw and heard  
My royal parents, who, while pious care  
Sat on their faded cheeks, pronounc'd with tears,  
Tears such as angels weep, this hour my last,  
But hence with fear—my Alexander comes,  
And fear and danger ever fled from him.  
My Alexander! Wou'd that he were here!  
For, Oh! I tremble, and a thousand terrors  
Rush in upon me, and alarm my heart:  
But hark, 'tis he, and all my fears are fled;  
My life, my joy, my Alexander comes,

ROXANA *within*.

Make fast the gate with all its massy bars;  
At length we've conquer'd this stupendous height,  
And reach'd the grove, whose wonderful ascent  
Is lost in clouds.

STATIRA.

Ye guardian Gods defend me!  
Roxana's voice! then all the vision's true,  
And die I must.

K

S C E N E

66 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

S C E N E II.

ROXANA, STATIRA.

ROXANA.

Secure the brazen gate,  
Where is my rival? 'tis Roxana calls.

STATIRA.

And what is she, who, with such tow'ring pride,  
Wou'd awe a princess that is born above her?

ROXANA.

Behold this dagger!—'Tis thy fate, Statira!  
Behold, and meet it as becomes a queen.  
Fain wou'd I find thee worthy of my vengeance;  
Here, take my weapon then; and, if thou dar'st—

STATIRA.

How little know'st thou what Statira dares!  
Yes, cruel woman! yes, I dare meet death,  
With a resolve, at which thy coward heart  
Wou'd shrink. For terror haunts the guilty mind;  
While conscious innocence, that knows no fear,  
Can, smiling, pass, and scorn thy idle threats.

ROXANA.

Return, fair insolent! return, I say.  
Dar'st thou, presumptuous to invade my rights!  
Restore him quickly to my longing arms,  
And with him give me back his broken vows,  
Or I will rend them from thy bleeding heart,

STATIRA.

Alas! Roxana! 'tis not in my power;  
I cannot if I wou'd—And, O ye Gods!

What

# A T R A G E D Y. 67

What were the world to Alexander's loss !  
But love, thou know'st, was ever deaf to reason :  
Wild as a storm, and lawless as the sea,  
It laughs at council, and contemns restraint,

ROXANA,

Oh ! sorceress, to thy accursed charms  
I owe the frenzy that distracts my soul :  
To them I owe my Alexander's loss.  
Too late thou tremblest at my just revenge,  
My wrongs cry out, and vengeance will have way.

STATIRA.

Yet think, Roxana, ere you plunge in murder,  
Think on the horrors that must ever haunt you !  
Think on the furies, those avenging ministers  
Of Heav'n's high wrath, how they will tear your  
soul ;

All day distract you with a thousand fears ;  
And when by night thou vainly seek'st repose,  
They'll gather round, and interrupt your slumbers  
With horrid dreams, and terrifying visions.

ROXANA:

Add still, if possible, superior horrors.  
Rather than leave my great revenge unfinish'd,  
I'd dare 'em all, and triumph in the deed.  
Therefore— [*Holds up the dagger.*]

STATIRA.

Hold, hold, thy hand advanc'd in air.  
I read my sentence written in thy eyes ;  
Yet, Oh ! Roxana, on thy black revenge,  
One kindly ray of female pity beam,  
And give me death in Alexander's presence.

ROXANA.

Not for the world's wide empire should'st thou see  
him.

K 2

Fool !

68 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

Fool! but for him thou might'st unheeded live;  
For his sake only art thou doom'd to die.  
The sole remaining joy that glads my soul,  
Is to deprive thee of the heart I've lost.

S C E N E III.

ROXANA, STATIRA, SLAVE.

SLAVE.

Madam, the king and all his guards are come;  
With frantic rage they thunder at the gate,  
And must e'er this have gain'd admittance.

ROXANA.

Ha!

Too long I've trifled. Let me then redeem  
The time mispent, and make great vengeance sure;

STATIRA.

Is Alexander, O! ye gods, so nigh,  
And can he not preserve me from her fury?

ROXANA.

Nor he, nor Heav'n shall shield thee from my justice;  
Die, forc'refs, and all my wrongs die with thee.

[Stabs her.]

ALEXANDER, *without*.

Away ye slaves! stand off—Quick let me fly  
With light'nings wings; nor heav'n, nor earth,  
shall stop me.

Ha! Oh, my soul! my queen, my love, Statira!  
These wounds! are these my promis'd joys?

STATIRA.

Alas!

My only love, my best and dearest blessing,  
Wou'd I had died before you enter'd here;  
For thus delighted, while I gaze upon thee,  
Death grows more horrid, and I'm loth to leave thee.

I

ALEX-

# T R A G E D Y.

ALEXANDER.

Thou shalt not leave me—Cruel, cruel stars!  
Oh, where's the monster, where's the horrid fiend,  
That struck at innocence, and murdered thee?

ROXANA.

Behold the wretch, who, desperate of thy love,  
In jealous madness gave the fatal blow :  
A wretch, that, to possess once more thy love,  
Wou'd with the blood of millions stain her soul.

ALEXANDER.

To dungeons, tortures, drag her from my sight.

STATIRA.

My soul is on the wing. O come, my lord,  
Haste to my arms, and take a last farewell.  
Thus let me die. Oh ! Oh !

ALEXANDER.

Look up my love.

O Heav'n! and will you, will you take her from me!

STATIRA.

Farewel my most lov'd lord : Ah me—farewel.  
Yet, ere I die, grant this request.

ALEXANDER.

Oh Speak,

That I may execute before I follow thee.

STATIRA.

Leave not the world till Heav'n demands you. Spare  
Roxana's life. 'Twas love of you that caused  
The death she gave me. And, oh! sometimes think  
Amidst your revels; think on your poor queen;  
And, ere the chearful bowl salute your lips,  
Enrich it with a tear, and I am happy

[Dies.

ALEX-

72 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

ALEXANDER.

Yet, ere thou tak'st thy flight—She's gone, she's  
gone.

All, all is hush'd, no music now is heard,  
The roses wither ; and the fragrant breath  
That wak'd their sweets, shall never wake 'em more.

ROXANA.

Weep not, my lord ! no sorrow can recall her.  
O ! turn your eyes, and, in Roxana's arms,  
You'll find fond love, and everlasting truth.

ALEXANDER.

Hence from my sight, and thank my dear Statira,  
That yet thou art alive.

ROXANA.

Oh ! take me to your arms.  
In spite of all your cruelty, I love you :  
Yes, thus I'll fasten on your sacred robe ;  
Thus, on my knees, for ever cling around thee,  
'Till you forgive me, or till death divide us.

ALEXANDER.

Hence, fury, hence : there's not a glance of thine,  
But, like a basilisk, comes wing'd with death.

ROXANA.

O ! speak not thus, to one who kneels for mercy.  
Think for whose sake it was I madly plung'd  
Into a crime abhorrent to my nature.

ALEXANDER.

Off, murd'ress, off ! for ever shun my sight ;  
My eyes detest thee, for thy soul is ruin'd.

ROXANA.

Barbarian ! yes, I will for ever shun thee.  
Repeated injuries have steel'd my heart,  
And I cou'd curse myself for being kind.

If

If there is any majesty above,  
 That has revenge in store for perjur'd love,  
 Send Heav'n the swiftest ruin on his head!  
 Strike the destroyer! lay the victor dead!  
 Kill the triumpher! and avenge my wrong!  
 In height of pomp, while he is warm and young,  
 Bolted with thunder, let him rush along.  
 But what are curses? Curses will not kill,  
 Nor ease the tortures, I am doom'd to feel.

## S C E N E IV.

ALEXANDER and EUMENES.

EUMENES.

Pardon, dread Sir, a fatal messenger.  
 The royal Syfigambis is no more.  
 Struck with the horror of Statira's fate,  
 She soon expired, and, with her latest breath,  
 Left Parisatis to Lyfimachus.  
 But what I fear most deeply will affect you,  
 Your lov'd Hephsestion's——

ALEXANDER.

Dead! then he is blest!  
 But here, here lies my fate, Hephsestion, Clytus!  
 My victories all for ever folded up  
 In this dear body. Here my banner's lost,  
 My standard's triumphs gone. I shall run mad!  
 Go, for the monument of this lov'd creature,  
 Root up these bowers, and pave 'em all with gold.  
 Draw dry the Ganges, make the Indies poor,  
 To deck her tomb: no shrine nor altar spare,  
 But strip the pomp from gods to place it there.

S C E N E

## 72 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

### SCENE V.

CASSANDER, THESSALUS.

CASSANDER.

He's gone—but whither?—follow Theſſalus;  
Attend his ſteps, and let me know what paſſes.

[Exit Theſſalus,

Vengeance lie ſtill, thy cravings ſhall be ſated.  
Death roams at large, the furies are unchain'd,  
And murder plays her mighty maſter-piece.

### SCENE VI.

POLYPERCHON, CASSANDER, *then* THESSALUS and  
PHILIP.

Saw you the king? he parted hence this moment,

POLYPERCHON.

Yes; with diſorder'd wildneſs in his looks,  
He ruſh'd along, till, with a caſual glance,  
He ſaw me where I ſtood: then ſtepping ſhort,  
Draw near, he cry'd—and graſp'd my hand in his;  
Where more than fevers rag'd in ev'ry vein,  
O Polyperchon! I have loſt my queen!  
Statira's dead!—and, as he ſpoke, the tears  
Gush'd from his eyes—I more than felt his pains.

THESSALUS,

Hence, hence, away!

CASSANDER.

Where is he, Theſſalus?

THESSALUS.

I left him circled by a crowd of princes.  
The poiſon tears him with that height of horror,  
Ev'n

Ev'n I cou'd pity him—he call'd the chiefs;  
Embrac'd 'em round—then, starting from amidst  
'em,  
Cried out, I come—'twas Ammon's voice; I know  
it—

Father, I come; but, let me, ere I go,  
Dispatch the business of a kneeling world.

POLYPERCHON.

No more; I hear him—we must meet anon.

CASSANDER.

In Saturn's field—there give a loose to rapture,  
Enjoy the tempest we, ourselves, have rais'd,  
And triumph in the wreck which crowns our ven-  
geance. [Exeunt.

### SCENE the PALACE.

ALEXANDER, *with his hair dishevell'd*, LYSIMACHUS,  
EUMENES, PERDICCAS, *and Attendants*. ALEX-  
ANDER *discover'd*.

ALEXANDER.

Search there; nay, probe me, search my wounded  
reins—  
Pull, draw it out.

LYSIMACHUS.

We have search'd, but find no hurt.

ALEXANDER.

O, I am shot, a forked burning arrow  
Sticks cross my shoulders: the sad venom flies  
Like light'ning thro' my flesh, my blood, my  
marrow.

LYSIMACHUS.

How fierce his fever!

L

ALEXANDER.

74 ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

ALEXANDER.

Ha! what a change of torments I endure!  
A bolt of ice runs hissing thro' my bowels;  
'Tis, sure, the arm of death; give me a chair;  
Cover me, for I freeze, and my teeth chatter,  
And my knees knock together.

EUMENES.

Have mercy Heaven!

ALEXANDER.

Ha! who talks of Heaven?  
I am all hell; I burn, I burn again;  
The war grows wond'rous hot; hey for the Tygris!  
Bear me, Bucephalus, amongst the billows.

*[jumps into the chair.]*

O 'tis a noble beast; I wou'd not change him  
For the best horse the sun has in his stable;  
For they are hot, their mangers full of coals;  
Their mains are flakes of light'ning, curls of fires;  
And their red tails like meteors whisk about.

LYSIMACHUS.

Help all; Eumenes, help.

ALEXANDER.

Ha, ha, ha, I shall die with laughter.  
Parmenio, Clytus, do you see yon fellow,  
That ragged soldier, that poor tatter'd Greek?  
See how he puts to flight the gaudy Persians,  
With nothing but a rusty helmet on, thro' which  
The grizzly bristles of his pushing beard  
Drive 'em like pikes—ha! ha! ha!

PERDICCAS.

How wild he talks!

LYSIMACHUS.

Yet war'ring in his wildness.

ALEXANDER.

# A T R A G E D Y.

ALEXANDER.

Sound, sound, keep your ranks close ; ay, now  
they come ;

O the brave din, the noble clank of arms !

Charge, charge apace, and let the phalanx move :

Darius comes—ay, 'tis Darius ;

I see, I know him by the sparkling plumes,

And his gold chariot drawn by ten white horses.

But, like a tempest, thus I pour upon him—

He bleeds ; with that last blow I brought him  
down :

He tumbles, take him, snatch the imperial crown.

They fly, they fly ; follow, follow—Victoria,

Victoria, Victoria— [*Leaps into the soldier's arms.*]

PERDICCAS.

Let's bear him softly to his bed.

ALEXANDER.

Hold, the least motion gives me sudden death ;

My vital spirits are quite parch'd, burnt up,

And all my smoky entrails turn'd to ashes.

LYSIMACHUS.

When you, the brightest star that ever shone,

Shall set, it must be night with us for ever.

ALEXANDER.

Let me embrace you all, before I die.

[*All kneel and weep.*]

Weep not my dear companions, the good Gods

Shall send ye in my stead a nobler prince ;

One that shall lead ye forth with matchless conduct.

LYSIMACHUS.

Break not our hearts with such unkind expressions.

PERDICCAS.

We will not part with you, nor change for Mars.

ALEXANDER.

# **ALEXANDER THE GREAT.]**

**ALEXANDER.**

Perdiccas, take this ring,  
And see me laid in the temple of Jupiter Ammon.

**LYSIMACHUS.**

To whom does your dread majesty bequeath  
The empire of the world?

**ALEXANDER.**

To him that is most worthy.

**PERDICCAS.**

When will you, sacred Sir, that we should give  
To your great memory those divine honours  
Which such exalted virtue does deserve?

**ALEXANDER.**

When you are all most happy, and in peace:  
Your hands—O Father, if I have discharg'd  
The duty of a man to empire born;  
If by unwearied toil I have deserv'd  
The vast renown of thy adopted son,  
Accept this soul which thou did'st first inspire,  
And which this sigh thus gives thee back again.  
[Dies.]

**LYSIMACHUS.**

There fell the pride and glory of the war.  
If there be treason let us find it out;  
Lysimachus stands forth to lead you on;  
And swears, by these most honour'd dear remains,  
He will not taste those joys which beauty brings,  
Until he has reveng'd the best of kings.

**F I N I S**







